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1899-1909

The Pittsburgh Chapter

D.A.R



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THE  
PITTSBURGH  
CHAPTER  
D. A. R.



A REVIEW OF TEN YEARS  
1899-1909



BY

MRS. SAMUEL A. AMMON

REGENT FROM OCTOBER 11, 1899 TO JUNE 4, 1909

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THE BLOCK HOUSE OF FORT PITT, BUILT 1764  
OWNED BY THE DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA  
(PITTSBURGH CHAPTER D. A. R., INCORPORATED)

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## OUR NATIONAL SOCIETY.

TEN years ago the number of members recorded in the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution was twenty-seven thousand four hundred and thirty-two; this year the Registrar General records seventy-two thousand seven hundred and fifty seven, and a voting membership in the Eighteenth Continental Congress of one thousand, four hundred and eight; the actual membership being fifty-eight thousand and twenty-four.

Ten years ago there seemed to be, in the National Society, three great objects of interest; the collection of funds for the proposed Memorial Hall, a Federal Law to prevent and punish the desecration of the Flag, and the amending of the Constitution and by-laws of the National Society. To a large majority a fourth interest seemed to be the defeat of Mrs. Donald McLean for the office of President General, an office for which many thought her to be peculiarly well fitted.

At the end of ten years we have seen our dream—that which, for many years, seemed as if always to be our "Castle of Air"—become a reality. Our Memorial Continental Hall is finished—its pure white marble walls shine and glisten through the beautiful foliage of the trees in Washington Monument Park. Within, the building so rarely beautiful in the simplicity of design, seems indeed a temple of patriotism as without, it is a monument to heroism.

As the years have passed each Congress seems more disposed to pass that law so much desired, which is deigned to protect the stars and stripes from misuse and commercialism, but the goal has not yet been reached. The States however have not waited—but in rapid succession have enacted laws, which serve to protect from desecration, the flag of the United States, within their borders, and now more than thirty States bear this law upon their statute books.

At the close of the sixth year of the past decade Mrs. Donald McLean was elected President General, and for four years has given to this Society a splendid administration and has raised our standard far above that conceived by its founders and Charter members.

Steadily has the Society increased in numbers, and with numbers has come a unity of purpose in the effort to preserve and promote the spirit of Patriotism throughout our land.

The preservation of historic spots—the celebration of anniversaries and the building of monuments is the foundation upon which we have built. We have taught the unthinking people of our country that without a reverence for the past, without public records of those who founded our nation and endured the hardships of the pioneer—we could not be a truly great people.

During the past ten years we have seen not only our beautiful Memorial Hall rise to honor the memory and spirit of the men and women who achieved American Independence, but tablets and monuments have been erected by the Daughters of the American Revolution and by associations with kindred interests all over the land, to honor the memory of hero, patriot and pioneer. A memorial hall, built by the Daughters of the American Revolution in memory of those first settlers, old in the history of our country, when the war for independence commenced, has been erected on Jamestown Island; at Valley Forge we see a great park, within which buildings and earth-works, sacred to the memory of the indomitable will of George Washington, are safe from destruction and decay, and in the building called the Headquarters of the Commander in Chief, are rooms restored and furnished by Daughters of the Revolution and of the American Revolution.

In the west we see rising high in the air a magnificent shaft to honor George Rogers Clark—Indian fighter and explorer, and across the great western plains at intervals great boulders of granite with tablets of bronze embedded in them, mark the Santa Fe Trail. In the south we remember with pride that one of the first interests to bind us together was the purchase, by the National Society, of Meadow Garden Farm, the home of George Walton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence; and here within our own home town we have preserved that which stands, not only for the courage of English blood, the endurance of Scot, but a monument symbolizing the courage and endurance, the steadfastness and integrity that has made us a Nation.

A tribute to the Block House is a tribute to that which it represents, for what is there in brick, stone, mortar or wood, of value to your country, if no thought save that of curiosity in peculiar construction or situation is aroused, if no thought comes of deeds of valor, tender care of wounded or dying, or of women and children, of victory won, or a country saved from savage, weakling or oppressor?

We give then our tribute to that strong little Redoubt of the great "Fort Pitt," which has withstood attacks of savage Indian, of mighty waters and still fiercer flames—of neglect, misuse and cunning greed. The hand of time and D. A. R. alone have dealt gently with those scarred and weather-beaten walls.

The Block House, now honored by men of all nations, as a monument to faith and integrity, of plans thought out by a master mind across the sea, William Pitt; a monument to the force and energy, courage and endurance of General Forbes, his Highland and his Colonial troops; a monument to Washington, Gist, Bouquet and many more whom we delight to honor as the founders of the great City, now stretching out many miles from the Block House, the place of its birth, to the east, the west, the north and south. "Per Tot Discrimina" the



words selected by General Forbes, are now our motto and the Block House is a monument not only to the power of England, to the Independence of America and to the valor of her men, but to the love, faith and loyalty of her daughters to their home and country.

#### OUR STATE.

At the end of ten years we are glad to record the fact, that there now exists in Pennsylvania a greater degree of friendliness and more sympathy between Chapters than existed, when your Regent first met the members of other Chapters. Ten years ago we found the members of Chapters in the State, practically strangers to one another—the work of organizing Chapters had been ably carried on for seven years by our member, Mrs. Julia K. Hogg, State Regent of Pennsylvania, but there having been but two Conferences held within the State, during the first eight years of the life of the National Society, there had been no incentive for joint action or work in the State itself.

In 1898 a resolution had been adopted by the Pennsylvania Delegates to the Continental Congress of that year, that a testimonial in the form of a permanent memorial should be established in honor of Mrs. Hogg, as a record of her services to the State, for seven years.

A committee was appointed, and after many arguments, discussions and delays, we finally agreed upon the plan to raise the sum of one thousand dollars; this sum to be invested, and the interest used as a prize for the best essay submitted, on a subject to be chosen by the committee. The contestants to be students in the women's colleges of the state, or girls in co-educational institutions.

Your Regent was elected treasurer, and given the honor of collecting most of the money she was to have in her care.

The Pittsburgh Chapter had pledged itself to contribute three hundred and fifty dollars to this proposed testimonial, and the Treasurer promptly served notice on the Regent, that the money must be paid.

The majority of the Chapters, then organized, contributed to this fund, also several individual members, including Mrs. James R. Mellon, Mrs. S. Jarvis Adams, Mrs. John B. Heron and the Regent of this Chapter.

Each year for seven years the committee has awarded the prize of fifty dollars, to a student in one of our colleges or co-educational institutions, and this year, acting upon the suggestion made by your Regent, the treasurer of the prize fund, the Pennsylvania Delegates to the Eighteenth Continental Congress, authorized the committee to secure a design for a bronze medal, so that hereafter a medal will accompany the cash prize of fifty dollars. The committee is also to send a medal to each winner of the prize in past years.

The income from this fund, of one thousand dollars, is a little over sixty dollars a year.

The next subject of common interest in the State, was the sug-

gestion made by the Pittsburgh Chapter, that the Daughters of the State, should present a gift to the Cruiser "Pennsylvania", then building in Cramps Ship-yard. The final decision was in favor of a bronze bas-relief portrait of William Penn, copied from the portrait of Penn in Armor, in the Historical Society's collection in Philadelphia.

The State Regent appointed a committee, and again your Regent had the honor of being treasurer, with the added honor of collecting the necessary fund of six hundred dollars, the total cost of the bronze medallion. This Chapter gave two hundred dollars to this fund, and in 1904 that magnificent bas-relief portrait of William Penn, the founder of our State, was sent to Pittsburgh, and exhibited in the assembly room of the Chamber of Commerce. The next spring it was placed in the officer's room of the Cruiser Pennsylvania, at League Island, the formal address of presentation being made by Miss Julia Morgan Harding, Chairman of the committee, and Vice-Regent of this Chapter.

The third interest, calling for concerted action in the State, has been Memorial Continental Hall; and after the State Legislature had passed an act appropriating the sum of two thousand dollars for one of the thirteen memorial columns, for the southern portico, the Pennsylvania Daughters of the the American Revolution, decided to assume the estimated cost of the front vestibule of the memorial Continental Hall.

Over six thousand five hundred dollars was needed for this part of the building—and has been collected and paid to the Treasurer General, this Chapter contributing several hundred dollars toward the total sum. The Chapters in the State have been interested in the preservation of several historic sites. An offer was made to assist the Sunbury Chapter in the purchase of the site of Fort Augusta, and the old stone magazine, but as an agreement, with the owners, regarding the price of the property was never concluded, the Sunbury Chapter has contented itself with placing a commemorative tablet on the river shore, nearby.

The Chapters, or Chapter Regents, throughout the State lent their aid and influence to us when destruction threatened our historic possession—the Block House of Fort Pitt. And seldom has greater interest been displayed in the House and Senate of Pennsylvania, than when the Pennsylvania Rail Road sought to influence the members to enact a law, which would have given that Corporation the right to condemn and take possession of our land and building. Our gratitude to our sister daughters, is very deep and genuine.

This year we hoped the bill presented at the request of the Governor, authorizing the laying out of a great state highway would become a law. We knew that this proposed highway would at some points touch the line of march of General Forbes, and that an opportunity would be afforded us to place way marks, of educational value, along the modern path through the wilderness—the conquest

of the Alleghenies being complete. But in the interests of Charity and philanthropy, the Governor gave up his cherished plan, and vetoed the bill.

Perhaps some day—there will be a great high-way across the Alleghenies, and here and there a monument—a tablet or other memorial, tracing the advance of the white man from the eastern to the western boarders of our state, and marking, at least in part, forever, the paths of Braddock and of Forbes.

### OUR CHAPTER.

When ten years ago, on the eleventh of next October, I was elected Regent of this Chapter, and I assure you, the responsibility weighed heavily upon me—I found three hundred and sixty-four members recorded on the Chapter list. To-day we close our tenth year—of administration—and the Chapter, on Thursday next, June tenth, will have reached its eighteenth birthday—with five hundred and fifty active members and one Honorary member on the roll.

Eighteen years ago this Chapter, at the close of the first year, of the National Society, October 11th, 1891, had enrolled seventy-five Charter members—there are now forty-three of this Charter membership among your members. Within the past ten years—Mrs. Mary O'Hara Spring, Miss Kate C. McKnight, Mrs. Lavinia Morgan Harding, Mrs. Mary H. Moorhead, Mrs. Mary Pelle Morton, Mrs. Sarah N. Collins McCandless—all Charter members of this Chapter, have passed away, leaving the impress of their lives upon us; having by their patriotism, their love of country, shown us the way to do our part, not only in the work of perpetuating the spirit of those long gone, but to care for those about us who are growing up from childhood to citizenship—or who have come to us from foreign shores.

During the past ten years, your Regent has endeavored to call the Board of Management, or as it is now called, the Executive Board, together, not oftener than was necessary for the promotion of the work of the Chapter. The number of Board meetings have averaged about eight, during each Chapter season of nine months—or eighty meetings, over which your Regent has presided, and now wishes to express to you, her appreciation of the interest shown by the members, you have at various times elected to serve as members of your Boards of Management, and Executive Boards. The Officers and members of the several Boards of the past ten years, have without exception—given their time and attention to the multitude of details connected with the Chapter work and interests, in a way that has made your Regent proud to be associated with them, and proud to have them as representatives of this Chapter.

The work of this Chapter is no trifling matter—your records show the completeness, and attention to detail, with which it has been carried on. For ten years the five regular Chapter meetings have been held each year, in October, December, February, April, and June, and

as a rule a special meeting held first, in March, when the Continental Congress met in Washington in February, and more recently in May, following closely the close of the Congress, now held during the week, in which the nineteenth of April falls. With few exceptions, Washington's birthday and Flag Day have been celebrated each year, either with simple ceremonies or with the more elaborate social meetings, in accordance with the time and place.

We look back with pleasure, upon those beautiful days under the trees of "Grandview", Mrs. S. Jarvis Adams' home, of "Bonnie Blink", the home of Mrs. William Walker, where we celebrated our Tenth Anniversary, after placing the bronze tablet, marking the site of the battle of Grant's Hill, September 14th, 1758,—the day among the roses and cherries, at the home of Mrs. McCallam and her daughters, at Evergreen, and another Flag Day at "Newington", Shields, when we were the guests of Mrs. Halsey Williams, and where seated amid those wonderful trees on that beautiful old place, we listened to an address by our present day hero, Captain Richmond P. Hobson. Surely our members have helped to make our Chapter life very happy. Then, too, we remember the year when we celebrated Flag Day and the Louisiana Purchase at the same time, in the Pittsburgh Golf Club House, on the border of beautiful Schenley Park, and Miss Killikelly told us that wonderful story of the land beyond the Mississippi, and that other beautiful day, in 1906, when the Chapter celebrated its fifteenth birthday, and Mrs. Donald McLean, President General of the National Society, was our guest, and the splendid Country Club and grounds were placed at our service by the Board of Governors. You do not wonder then that all of these celebrations and those other two, that one held on Flag Day, 1907, when we met at the Block House, and raised a great new flag, in honor of the law passed to protect that historic place from vandal corporations, and to honor the man—Mr. M. H. Kennedy—whose hand guided the "Bill" to safety in the Governor's hands; and last year when Flag Day was celebrated in our Churches—and the ceremonies there made lasting impressions upon old and young alike, are to your Regent beautiful pictures of each year of Chapter life.

We have, too, during the past decade, twice entertained our President General, Mrs. Fairbanks, for three times has this Chapter been honored by the presence of the President General of the National Society. First, when we entertained the National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution in 1901 and again in 1903 when we entertained the Daughters of the American Revolution of Pennsylvania, when they met in conference here upon our invitation, and Mrs. Fairbanks was again our guest. The Chapter, at that time, entertained its guests by having a concert in Carnegie Music Hall, by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, with Luigi Von Kunits, as soloist, and Victor Herbert, Director; the concert being followed by a reception, given through the courtesy of the Trustees of Carnegie Institute, in the



Art Galleries; and Mrs. James R. Mellon, our member, and Vice President General of the National Society, gave a magnificent reception, at the Hotel Schenley, for the Chapter and its guests.

The third time we were thus honored was when Mrs. Donald McLean was present at the time of our fifteenth anniversary. That day marks the only absence of your Regent, from any Chapter celebration during the past ten years. Nor has your Regent been absent from any Board or Chapter meeting during that time, and we have attended seven State Conferences—Lancaster, Wilkesbarre, Harrisburg, Pittsburgh, Allentown, Bellefonte and Clearfield, and ten times have, as Regent, represented this Chapter at the annual Continental Congress in Washington, and many times have been called upon to speak before other organizations in the interests of History or Patriotic Education. We now make our acknowledgments to a higher power than any human agency, for it seems that in the course of human events, this record could not have been made, for during that time we were for one winter—that of 1903—going back and forth from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg, in the interests of the Block House for a period of seven weeks, and during a second session of the State Legislature, 1907—three weeks for the same purpose—to secure an act to protect our Historic Block House, from the power of Corporations. And the beautiful loving cup you gave me in April, 1903, at the close of that difficult year, is an ever present reminder of your appreciation of the services rendered, and is more than a recompense for the days full of fatigue and anxiety; of fear and determination.

Life—for the period of ten years—has not been altogether smooth, but in some way the rough places seem, always, to have come when the Chapter was taking a holiday.

We have not kept a record of all committee meetings, attended within the past ten years, but to make a liberal allowance, your Regent has attended every committee meeting held in the interests of Chapter work, save perhaps five or six, but we can not remember of even that number being held without our presence.

In winter we have varied the routine of Chapter meetings by the introduction of programs, which have included many papers of rare value to us, as students of history, and sometimes we have had music on our programs which has been to us an inspiration. At mid-winter we have celebrated the birth-anniversary of George Washington, and at times his wedding anniversary.

Sometimes in this, our regular place of meeting, the Twentieth Century Club House, and upon two notable occasions, once at the residence of Mrs. William Thaw, Jr., when Mr. Tomlinson addressed us, and once at the residence of Mrs. S. Jarvis Adams, when we listened to the poetic language of Miss Katherine Locke.

On other anniversary days we have heard Mr. Tomlinson speak of "Washington, the Man," when the High School pupils were our guests; and Miss Jessie Harding read to us "The Man without a Country," and

Will Carleton, "The People's Poet," was with us on another Washington's birthday anniversary. The lectures by Miss Worstell, on Nathaniel Greene, and on the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, and by Miss Jane Meade Welch, on Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, renewed our interest in history and in historical research, and have served to keep before us the effect of these great men on our country, and to give us more determination to live up to their ideals, and to help our country to an even greater future.

And during these ten years of which we speak—what have we done for our country?

We have been interested in many things—the School City, Children of the Republic, our own Children of the American Revolution, Civil Service, the protection of our flag, our City government, the boys and girls of our Southern mountains, the children in our own City parks and playgrounds, and our City settlements and Camp schools for foreigners.

We have contributed also to the memorial fund for the nurses of the Spanish-American War, and to the Memorial Chapel at Valley Forge. Magazines have been sent to our soldiers in the Philippines, and prizes given for essays on historical subjects, in our public schools.

Your great flag floated over historic Arsenal Park, when the park was dedicated to the use of the people, until the close of our sesquicentennial year.

And what have we not done? Some plans of interest have not been carried to completion. We hoped to mark the place where Washington and Gist crossed the Allegheny river in 1753, but the work was deferred until the Block House, then in jeopardy, was safe. Later the Colonial Dames carried out the contemplated plan, and again that organization has thought to carry out the plan we have often considered—of marking the site of Fort Necessity. Our ambition was the purchase of that property, but when the owner gave his final decision, that he would not consider any offer we could make, the committee was discontinued.

We think that historic site of too great importance for a simple tablet, and hope that the interest we promoted in the subject, will be the means of having erected there a monument, worthy the character of Washington, who there met reverses which discouraged him, but only for a moment, and then but added to that determination which led him through countless discouragements to victory and honor.

Co-operation of Patriotic Societies in the interest of Fort Necessity, as in a great memorial for the Founders of our City, would result in that, which would truly honor those who prepared the wilderness for our habitation.

A small beginning has been made for a genealogical and historical book collection in Carnegie Library, and some additions have been made to our collection of relics, also in the Carnegie galleries. But,

of other plans, hopes and aspirations still unattained we will say nothing, but leave all to the kindly care of the Recording Secretary, and, after all, you will find there, but little planned—a blank.

In December, 1906, the Pittsburgh Post reminded us that the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of our City was drawing near, and later at the request of the Regent and Vice-Regent, Miss Harding, representing the Chapter, the Mayor, Mr. Guthrie, took under consideration the plan proposed of having a great historic and civic celebration, in honor of our sesqui-centennial and of the act making of our two cities one great municipality.

A year has not yet passed since that celebration, and we will not speak of our interest in it in detail.

The Mayor decided that the celebration should be by the City, and not by a combination of organizations. Your Regent did not, therefore, officially represent the Chapter, but was, with Miss Harding, appointed a member of the general committee, and being elected third Vice-President, and Miss Harding having been appointed Chairman of the Women's Auxiliary Committee, both were members of the Executive Committee.

During the early summer the Chairman, Mr. William H. Stevenson, appointed a committee of three—Mr. E. M. Bigelow, Mr. William H. Davis, Post Master, and our self—to form a plan for an out-of-door celebration, and we drew up the plan which was adopted and carried out by the Greater Pittsburgh Day Committee, of which we were also a member, by appointment of the Chairman, Mr. H. D. W. English, and later made Chairman of the History Division.

Upon the details of that celebration, or of those planned by the Anniversary Day Committee, of which we were also a member, we will not dwell, for you are all familiar with them, but we do remind you, that to you our people owe much, for by your insistence and evident interest in the subject, and through the interest you have shown, and the influence you have gained, during the past eighteen years, came the means of reminding the people of Pittsburgh that we too have a history, and that none more picturesque exists in all the land.

On the green hills of Schenley Park, this Spring, you have again seen the touch of your hand, in the historic pageant, formed by the children of the Recreation Centers and Foreign Associations—representing the coming of Nations—Indian, French, Scot, Irish, Slav, Italian, Swede, Hungarian, each in turn, advancing to bow before the spirit of Pittsburgh, Columbia and of Father Pitt. The games and dances of these young representatives of the Nations which make up the population of our great City, were of a historical value far beyond our realization.

## THE PAST YEAR.

During the past year your Regent has made four hundred and fifty committee appointments, and the result of the work of these committees is seen in improved By-Laws, more varied programs for Chapter meetings, more subscribers for the D. A. R. Magazine, a better knowledge of the extent of the book and relic collections belonging to the Society, a greater interest in us from our non-resident members, and in a steady advance in the interests of Patriotic Education.

Your Committee on Entertainment planned for us one of our most charming entertainments for the eleventh of February, and your Flag Day Committee has in store for you another day when we will meet in a social way, yet not forgetting our duty as patriotic women, owing much to our country and the people who come to us from across the sea.

Through our Flag Committee recommendations made for the presentation of flags have been adopted, and through the Flag Law Committee the interest in the law to prevent and punish the desecration of the Flag is becoming wide-spread, and we believe that during the next decade abuse of the Flag will be practically discontinued.

Through the work accomplished by your Committee on Permanent Memorials you have placed a tablet of enduring bronze upon the monument to Dr. Nathaniel Bedford, thereby recording your appreciation of a life well spent in service to the country of his choice.

And through the suggestion of the Committee on Historic Sites we hope ere long another memorial will be placed, which will record the names of men, who, after serving their country in the cause of Liberty, were associated with the early history of our City.

You have given Flags to our playgrounds and recreation parks, to our Soho Settlement, and to our Camp School, and prizes to pupils in private and public schools, and we thank you for your interest and your co-operation, not only during the past year, but for the past ten years, during which time your interests have been mine, and wherein I have failed to please or to fulfil expectations, I can only plead human weakness, as I told you many years ago, the motto of my forebears was "Try," and mine by adoption, "Unto thine ownself be true, and it will follow as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man."

EDITH DARLINGTON AMMON, Regent.





THE SITE  
OF  
**FORT PITT**  
BUILT  
1759 - 1761  
VISITED BY  
**GEORGE WASHINGTON**  
1753 - 1758 - 1770

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